GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PLANNING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:476
ANSWERED ON:26.02.2016
Census of Poor People
Azad Shri Kirti (JHA)

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is no provision for census of poor people in the country and the Government only updates data on the basis of estimate prepared by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO);
(b) if so, the details thereof;
(c) whether the criteria adopted for differentiating people living below poverty line and middle class people are very comprehensive and if so, the details thereof;
(d) whether there is any mechanism in place to ascertain the number of people who have achieved APL status from BPL; and
(e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR MINISTRY OF PLANNING
AND MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE
RAO INDERJIT SINGH

(a) & (b): Since 1992, Ministry of Rural Development has been conducting BPL Censuses through the State Governments and UTs to identify the rural households living Below the Poverty Line who could be assisted under its various programmes. These censuses were conducted in rural areas in 1992, 1997 and 2002. The latest census termed as Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC) has been launched in 2011 in rural as well as urban areas. This seeks to identify the target group of beneficiary households for various programs/schemes of Government based on various characteristics of individual households as obtained in the census.

(c) The erstwhile Planning Commission estimated the number of people living below the poverty line based on the data collected in household consumer expenditure survey using a poverty line defined in terms of the Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure (MPCE).The methodology for estimation of poverty followed by the erstwhile Planning Commission had been based on the recommendations made by the experts in the field from time to time. The erstwhile Planning Commission constituted an Expert Group under the chairmanship of Prof. Suresh D. Tendulkar in 2005 to review the methodology for estimation of poverty. The Tendulkar Committee recommended MPCE of Rs. 447 for rural areas and Rs 579 for urban areas as the poverty line for the year 2004-05, which was accepted by the erstwhile Planning commission. Since January 2011, the erstwhile Planning Commission had been using Tendulkar Committee methodology to estimate the poverty line and the poverty ratio at national and state level. For the year 2011-12, the erstwhile Planning Commission, using the poverty line recommended by the Tendulkar Committee for 2004-05 and updating it to 2011-12 had estimated the poverty lines as monthly per capita consumption expenditure (MPCE) of Rs. 816 in rural areas and Rs. 1000 in urban areas. These poverty lines segregate the entire population into two categories i.e., people living below poverty line and people living above poverty line.

(d) & (e) The Government has not conducted any national level panel survey to ascertain the number of people who have achieved APL status from the BPL status.
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